


PART
OF A
LETTER

FROM A
Freeholder in the Country,
TO A
Freeholder in *Edinburgh*.

SIR,
T is an astonishing Proof of that infamous Depth of Corruption in which this Age is sunk, to consider how Men of all Parties have bemoaned the Poverty and the Ruin of their Country, and yet few or none of any Party have done their Duty to relieve it: Ambitious and covetous Men, in every Faction, either of the Minority or Majority, have thus mocked and deluded this miserable Nation, by Turns; for, while they have impudently covered over their most selfish Designs and Pursuits, in Political Matters, *with Zeal for the Interests of a sinking Nation, and an extraordinary Concern to save it from Ruin*, all in the Nation, have been Witnesses against many of both Parties, that, in this Hubbub, their Zeal was only to support their Leaders and themselves, and that, by the real *Interests of a sinking Nation*, they only mean the *Interests of their sinking Party Friends and Dependents*. I say, Sir, we have seen, that the great Contention amongst them was

was only, who should rule the Roast, and who should be uppermost. *Scotsmens* Eyes ought now to be opened; for *every Freeholder of common-Sense* may see, that so soon as most Men gain their selfish and Party Ends, they lay aside this Cloak, *the Interest of the Nation*, until they are again shuffled out of Place and Power by those who want to be in, and then they commence Patriots as zealously as before, and find it their Interest to act over the same Farce.

If one attend, he will hear Zealots of all Parties from a chief Minister, down to the Baillie of a Borough, and from the Patron and Leader of the Patriots, down to the meanest Fool of his Party, all professing the most sacred Attachment to the Interests of their Country; and yet the essential Interests of their Country are scandalously neglected by them all: And it is a Wonder, that the Patience of the Nation is not quite exhausted by this Time.--Here a well-meaning and honest Country Gentleman may step in, and say perhaps, They are not agreed, wherein the Interests of the Country ly, or otherwise they would join together to advance them, however in other Things they differ. But this Gentleman must know, that both Parties are agreed, and both Parties own, That the real Interest of *Scotland* lies in the Application of those Laws, and in the zealous pursuing of those Measures, which tend to revive and encourage the Labour of the People, and increase the Wealth of the Nation. They are agreed, That as Agriculture, Manufacture and Commerce, are the very Axes of the Power, as well as the Source of the Riches of all Nations; so, for want of these in *Scotland*, our Country is turned into a Wilderness of Hunger-beaten Vagabonds; and that the greatest Number of the Inhabitants, who are the only real Riches of the Nation, are through Idleness, want of Manufacture

-facture and Trade, become an annual Charge and Curse to the rest. Hereby the Interest of the Landed Gentlemen is reduced, and Poverty and Want rages amongst the best Families, insomuch that many are tempted to open their Fists to Bribery, in order to prevent the impending Ruin of their Families.

In these Things, both those in the Majority and Minority are agreed, and Courtiers and Patriots set to their Seals to the Truth of them, so that their Sin and Wickedness cannot be imputed to Ignorance.

²⁹¹ The People of *Scotland* have their Eyes, their Ears and their Hearts convinced, from an impartial Attendance to the Conduct of both, it is the Interest of their Parties, it is Posts to themselves, and Power to their Leaders, that they drive at. Some there are indeed who flee at higher Game, and bustle for a Revolution, and, contrary to their most solemn Oaths, are intent upon destroying that House they are sworn to support.

That this is the Game many of all Parties have played this miserable Nation, is too apparent to need any Evidence; and every thinking unprejudiced Man's Conscience, as well as the Miseries of the Inhabitants, are Witnesses of the Truth of it.

What Taxes which affect the Labour of the People, and the industrious Poor, are lessened? What one Point, as to our Trade and Manufacture, has either one Party or another espoused? What destructive and pernicious Trade has our present flaming Patriots attempted to suppress or remove? What have they all, or any of them done, for these real Interests of this ruined Country? They all own, that it is their Duty to pursue these Things, and yet, are they here united? No, upon the contrary, the Patriots will oppose the Court, even in Motions for the Good of the Nation, with the same Keenness as the Court does the Country Party.

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In short, if we will hear the Voice of the People, which is in some Sense the Voice of GOD; or, if we will look upon their Faces, we will both hear and see this Truth wrote plain as Sun-shine, that the People in *Scotland* are grinded between the Millstones of two Factions, whose great Quarrel is, which shall be uppermost.

And where the Generality of the Guardians of a Nation give the World to think, that they understand Patriotism in no *other Sense*, at least discover it no *other Way*, but in hot Contentions for particular Parties and Interests, and in endless carping, and censuring every publick Measure, right or wrong, without doing any Thing, in their own Sphere, to remedy or redress real Grievances: Nothing but the Interposition of Almighty Providence can prevent a Country of such Mortals from impending Ruin. This I take to be the present Situation of *Scotland*, with respect to Parties, and I am sorry for it; but I never do expect to see it otherways.

For the Desire of Distinction, the Love of Money, and an Ambition to possess Posts of Power and Profit, is as natural to the Men of this Age, as it is to breathe; and, whatever one Party alledge against another, it is certain, that the thing they really all aim at is, Who shall be uppermost.

And to expect that the Efforts of Men and Parties against one another, in their Pursuits of these Things, will ever cease, is vain and imaginary: To fancy this, is to build a Castle in the Air, unless we were certain, that God Almighty would make them anew; for while Ambition and Covetousness reign among Mankind, there Contentions will subsist, especially in a Country where Pride and Poverty foment the Strife.

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Therefore, as we Freeholders cannot alter the Nature of Things, the only Part a true Countryman should act is, that as both Parties have made a Tool of these Words, *The Interest of their Country*, to advance the Interest of their Party, so they ought to unite in making a Tool of the contending Parties, to advance the real Interest of our Country: And, as in this Way I think it my Duty to act, I shall consider the present Question before you in this View, and in no other.

And, in the first Place, I am convinced it would be for the Interest of the Country, and for the Honour of this County, and would prove an Example to the other Counties of the Nation, if the Freeholders could find One in the Shire, whose *universal Character*, both from his past Conduct and his present Behaviour, gives us a sure Foundation for the firmest Confidence as to his future Management: He ought to be one whose easy Circumstances in Life concur with his Honour, to raise him above the Power of being tempted by either Post, Pension or Gratuity; one who never was, nor ever will be a Placeman: And, as it is hardly to be expected that even such a one will neglect his own private Affairs, and exhaust his Fortune in serving his Country, it is my Opinion, that the Freeholders ought to subscribe 400 or 500 a Year, to defray his Expence. In *doing so*, they would act as becomes the first County in *Scotland*, and their Example might have an Influence upon the rest of the Nation.

But you'll now ask me, What if the Freeholders cannot unanimously agree upon such a one, nor consent to pay his Charges? What is then to be done? And that the present Contention among the Parties is only, who shall be uppermost? In that Case, if I suspect that we independent Freeholders of *Mid-Lothian*

Lothian are only to be made a Tool of, to advance or oppose the Interests of a Party, and that the same Farce is to be acted in this Shire as it hath been done in other Counties ; I resolve to act in the following Manner, for the real Interest of the Country.

I will impartially consider the Leaders of both Parties, and weigh in my own Mind who are the wisest and best Men, and which of them merit most Confidence from their Countrymen upon the Account of their past Services, their Contempt of Money, and their real Worth ; and I will support those Leaders, because I think it is for the Interest of the Country that such have the Balance of Power in their Hands.

As to Candidates, tho' I do not approve of Sir *Charles's* Conduct in every Step, and therefore could wish we could have one more universally agreeable to the Shire ; yet I think it will not be for the Interest of the Country at once to discard him, in case we cannot find one who will be of greater Service to the real Interest of his Country : I shall therefore impartially state his Case to you.

Sir *Charles* was solicited in the Year 1737, to represent us in Parliament : He did not solicit the Shire, but the Shire solicited him ; and tho' his Circumstances were not the most easy, yet he complied with our Request, and attended the Parliament for several Years, to the impairing of his Fortune.

In 1741, finding the Inconveniency of this, he absolutely declined to stand any longer ; but his Conduct in Parliament being universally approven of, he was, after many warm Intreaties, prevailed upon to do so. Some, who were sensible that he had lost enough this Way already, proposed that the Shire should settle 400 *l.* a Year upon him, to bear his Charges ; and many were of Opinion, that it be-
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came this County, in this Matter, to set an Example to the rest of *Scotland*; but tho' Sir *Charles* did not strongly oppose this himself, yet it was not gone into.

Since which Time he joined vigorously in the same Measures with his Party, and, probably upon that Account, he got a Post, which was of no Significancy to the Country, tho' of great Profit to himself; and, in 1742, when he came to be re-elected, did the Gentlemen except against this Conduct? No, they, without any Opposition, rechose him; being sensible what a Loser he formerly must have been, by complying with their Request.

'Tis true, since 1742, he has in some Votes acted contrary to the Sentiments of many Gentlemen in the Shire; and, in this Matter, I will leave him to justify himself: For, as I condemn those in the Opposition, for voting against the Court Party in any Motion which is for the Good of the Nation, so I condemn him for voting against the Patriots in the like Case. However, we Bystanders plainly see, that these Parties oppose generally one another, right or wrong, by the Slump; and, 'tis to be feared, whoever shall be chosen will act the same Part.

Indeed I wish the Gentlemen may be so lucky as to hit upon such a singular Man, as will leave his Party in a Vote, when it is for the Good of the Country, and against the Interest of his Party, and who will give sufficient Satisfaction to the Freeholders that he will do so.

Therefore unless I am fully satisfied this is the Case, I am resolved to vote for Sir *Charles*; and, in determining myself, I set the Consideration of Sir *Charles* entirely aside, and disinterestedly consider the Interest of the Nation, without regard to himself or any Party.

Sir

Sir *Charles* is now in an Office, which does Honour to our Country, that a *Scots* Man possesses it, and sits at a Board, where the greatest Friends to the Place-Bill never objected to a Parliament Man for doing so. He himself most solemnly avers, That he laid down his other Post, (which, all Things considered, was rather more beneficial as to his *private Interest*) that he might move in a Sphere eminently to the Advantage of his Countrymen. Whether you believe him or not, no Matter, it is certain, that in the Exercise of this Office, he has every Day an Opportunity of being of the greatest Use to our Manufactures, and to our Plantation-Trade in *Scotland*, and of providing many of our destitute Countrymen in Bread abroad.

And if he performs what he professes, he may do more real Service to *Scotland*, than half a Score of both Patriot and Court-Members together; of which I think we should give him a Trial.

I think therefore, unless in the Case before stated, it would be acting contrary to the real Interests of *Scotland*, to discard him; especially, as it may happen, that whoever we elect, may act the same Part which we condemn in him, and, at the same Time, may never have it in his Power to serve his Country, to that eminent Degree, as Sir *Charles* has now a fair Opportunity of doing; and therefore, I resolve to make Sir *Charles's* Interest a Tool to promote that of his Country.

These are now my Sentiments; but I leave myself open to Conviction, being now in the Country, and unacquainted with your Politicks in Town. I think whoever you pitch upon, ought to correspond with you, when any Bill of Importance is upon the Carpet, and receive your Advice. I wish you may be happy, in a right Choice, and am,

SIR, &c.